

Curb, Dustin (DES)

From: Ashley Lindell <aclinde73@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, October 1, 2022 5:07 PM
To: DES SBCC
Subject: Fall 2022 Residential Code Updates, Energy Code, Heat Pump Proposals

External Email

Dear Members of the State Building Code Council,

My name is Ashley Lindell, I am a family practice physician and a parent of 2 children. I live and practice in the Seattle area. I urge you to adopt the proposed energy code updates. A rapid transition away from the use of "natural" gas is vitally important to mitigating climate change and protecting human health. As I am sure you are aware, "natural" gas is predominately methane, a potent driver of climate change.

Climate breakdown is already affecting human health, including right here in Washington. Just last week, for example, I opened my work email and found an emergency alert from Seattle Children's Hospital to referring clinicians noting that their Emergency Department had had a sustained census of above 250% for multiple evenings that week, that their inpatient acute care census had been above 100% for several days, and that they were running under a disaster incident command structure. The reason- they were seeing a high number of children with respiratory distress due to poor air quality related to wildfire smoke. As I think we are all aware, while wildfires are a normal part of many ecosystems here in the West, climate change has substantially increased the number and intensity of wildfires, as well as the length of the wildfire season.

Imagine what it's like to be a parent of a kid with asthma. You do everything you can to manage it well- you make sure they always have the inhalers they need, you make sure they get a flu shot every fall, you keep your house clean to minimize exposure to dust and mold. But, you can't control whether the air outside will give your child an asthma attack. Imagine what it's like to watch your child struggle to breathe. To drive to the emergency room with your child wheezing in the back seat. To wait for your child to be seen because the ER is overwhelmed.

Imagine what it's like to have to tell your child that they can't play outside because the air is too dirty and it will make them sick. For days on end, in the summer, when children should be playing outside.

And of course, although the health effects of exposure to wildfire smoke may be more obvious in people who are more sensitive, such as a kid with asthma, it's bad for all of us.

Homes and buildings are one of the largest and fastest-growing sources of climate pollution in Washington, as our population grows. We have an opportunity to reduce emissions by transitioning away from the use of methane gas to heat high efficiency heat pumps that run on sustainably generated electricity. The time to act is now. Let's do it.

Sincerely,
Ashley C Lindell MD
Family Medicine
Kaiser Permanente
(affiliation provided for identification purposes only)